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## **Press Release**

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“The Meter Runs Backwards!” (Commissioner of Agriculture tours first ACRE grant, on-farm wind turbine.)

October 29, 2008, Bennett — Commissioner of Agriculture John Stulp and project partners toured the first “ACRE grant” wind turbine erected on the Eastern Plains October 29th. Dallas Gilbert of Bennett has completed installation of a Skystream 1.8kW wind turbine, to help offset energy cost on his heritage poultry farm, Eastern Plains Natural Food Co-op.

Commissioner Stulp described the Colorado Department of Agriculture’s *Advancing Colorado’s Renewable Energy* grants, which provides funding to promote energy-related projects which benefit the agriculture industry. Gilbert’s is the first of five turbines to be erected throughout Eastern Colorado to demonstrate the applicability of small-scale turbines for agriculture uses.

During the tour Gilbert proudly displayed his APA certified heritage Blue Slate turkeys, which are free-ranged, raised without the use of antibiotics or hormones, and chemically free processed by air chilling. He has the largest flock of this rare heritage breed in the United States. He also spoke of his long standing ambition to generate his own electricity. On October 8<sup>th</sup> Gilbert’s Skystream wind turbine was up and running. Gilbert excitedly announced to the project partners, “The meter is running backwards!” Gilbert expects the turbine will generate one-third of his farm’s energy needs each year. Commissioner Stulp congratulated Gilbert for being a pioneer of on-farm wind generation.

This ACRE grant is being administered by Southeast Colorado Resource Conservation & Development, iCAST (International Center for Appropriate & Sustainable Technology), Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, and Baca County Conservation District. The project will establish five demonstration sites on farms in Eastern Colorado. These pilot projects will become the template for other agriculture producers to use when working with the turbine companies and electric companies.

Gilbert expressed his gratitude to the project partners, and the Department of Agriculture in particular for helping meet one of his life goals, “This is a dream come true.”

- Photos and article by Misty George

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Commissioner Stulp congratulates Dallas Gilbert for being a pioneer of on-farm wind generation.



Dallas Gilbert's prize heritage Blue Slate turkeys, with the Skystream wind turbine visible in the background.